

Guide to help you do an on-line retreat

A retreat is a time of quiet reflection and prayer, away from the daily routine, to look at one's life in the presence of Jesus Christ: to see what is going well, to see what needs to change, to make resolutions and to begin again. It is also a good moment to grow in our relationship with Jesus, to learn to love God more.

Lismullin draws its inspiration from St. Josemaria, founder of Opus Dei, who proclaimed the call to find God in our ordinary daily lives in the middle of the world. Lismullin offers you the possibility of doing this on-line retreat during the pandemic to help you find spiritual renewal in a time of uncertainty and limited activity.

The meditations or sessions on guided prayer offer points for reflection and conversation with God. And, in this guide, we offer suggestions for how to listen to the audio meditations and how to prepare to make a retreat on your own.

HOW TO PREPARE TO DO A SPIRITUAL RETREAT?

1. **Make Time:** Set aside these few days and dedicate them to your spiritual renewal. Try not to combine them with other activities and jobs.
2. **Make a Schedule:** Set consistent times each day to listen to the meditations - two or three meditations per day. The enclosed timetable will help you do this.
3. **Find a Space:** Choose a space with minimal distractions for the retreat. Try to spend some time in personal prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament. You might consider going to your local church to listen to the meditations; or, you may consider creating a space in your own home to use for this retreat.
4. **Keep a Journal:** Write down ideas from the meditations that strike you, as well as the thoughts, inspirations, and resolutions that arise from your prayer and reflection.
5. **Strive to Keep Silence:** A retreat requires interior silence and exterior silence, which helps us maintain a lasting conversation with God.
6. **Spiritual Practice:** as well as the material offered for the retreat it is suggested each day to read and meditate on the Gospel, pray the Rosary, go to confession if possible, etc.

HOW DO I GET THE MOST OUT OF THE MEDITATIONS

1. **Play the first meditation:** Listen to the opening prayer and place yourself in the presence of God. As you listen, take notes. By taking notes, you will know the theme of the meditation, you will cut down on distractions, and you will stay on track.

2. Reflect: When the meditation ends, take about 10 – 15 minutes to look over your notes and think about what God is saying to you: Are there things you could work on to deepen your love for him? Are there concrete things about which you can make a resolution? Jot those down.

3. Play the remaining meditations in the retreat: work through each meditation in the same way as step two and three.

4. Take your time: Try not to listen to the meditations back-to-back. Remember to make time throughout each day for additional spiritual practices (see no. 6 above), meals, and daily exercise.

5. Examine: At the end of the first day of the retreat do a brief Examination of Conscience to see how you have used the time, what resolutions you have made, and consider what you need to do to make even better use of the following day.

HOW SHOULD I CONCLUDE THE RETREAT?

Firstly, God is very pleased with your efforts during these days. Come away from this retreat with gratitude for what Our Lord has done for you and make two or three concrete resolutions that will help you deepen your relationship with Our Lord following the retreat.

When you conclude the retreat, remember that the themes addressed should continue to offer inspiration as you progress in your spiritual life. Perhaps once a week or once a month, review your notes and resolutions from the retreat in your time of personal prayer.

We all need help in our journey to God so don't feel shy about asking for help from a more experienced person who can help you along the way with spiritual guidance. The priests involved in this retreat and organisers would be very happy to offer their support and guidance, so do ask.

If you take this sacred time seriously, with the help of the Holy Trinity and our Blessed Mother, you will find yourself progressing deeper into your interior life.